

BRIDGES

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2013

FASHION:

Two looks for
Christmas casual and
New Year's glitz. **P. 26**

MUSIC:

Our six favourite
songs for the holiday
season. **P. 20**

SHARP EATS:

Step-by-step guide
to building your own
gingerbread house. **P. 26**

A STARPHOENIX COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER



TOO SOON FOR CHRISTMAS

LOSING HER SON MAKES THIS
THE MOST DIFFICULT SEASON
OF ALL FOR WANDA CAMPBELL. **P. 11**

FREE

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ON THE COVER PG. 11



Lindsay Antosh and her mom, Wenda Campbell, are trying to cope this Christmas season after losing their daughter and son, 17-year-old Alyssa Baskich, in a tragic accident last August. (MARK P. FORTIN/Postmedia Network)

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A step-by-step guide to building your own gingerbread house



Andrew Matte
1967-2013

This edition of Bridges is published on what should be one of the happiest days of the year. For those of us at Bridges and The StarPhoenix, the joys of the season are tempered by the loss of one of our dear.

Our friend and colleague Andrew Matte died unexpectedly on Thursday, shortly before this edition went to press. As of this writing, we don't know the cause of death.

Our thoughts are with Andrew's wife Carmelle, Andrew, his family and his many friends.

It is hard to know what's right at times like these, but we can think of no more appropriate tribute than to share some of Andrew's work with the readers to whom he dedicated his professional life. Thus, the decision to run his last story in Bridges this week.

Andrew's compassion for the disadvantaged — one of his great strengths as a writer — shines through in this week's poignant, thought-provoking cover story.

We think it's one of his best.

We'll miss Andrew's quick wit, positive spirit and his unshakable belief in the power of journalism to help us know each other better. We're sorry he left us so soon. Our lives have been enriched by the time we shared with him.

BRIDGES COVER PHOTO BY DON HEALY

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CITY NEWS

BE A SANTA TO A SENIOR

Volunteers deliver gifts to isolated seniors

By Angelina Jiménez

Christmas is a time to spend with friends, family and those close to you. But what if someone doesn't have family in the city? Or many friends close by? That's the case for many seniors in the community living in care homes — they may not have any visitors during the holidays.

That's why Greg Chayayn, owner of Sodexo's franchise of these last-mile delivery carts, started the Be a Santa to a Senior program in Scottsdale. The home-delivery program has been in place since the winter of 2010. Five years ago, Chayayn decided it was time to bring it to Scottsdale. Gifts and Christmas cards are delivered in or near towns who may not have family close by to spend the holidays with.

"We were acutely aware of the need, and thought 'What a simple, yet profound way to brighten the Christmas season for these folks who potentially get overlooked,'" Chayayn explains of his decision to start the program.

This year, around 800 gifts were delivered to 11 different facilities in the city. Workers at the care homes suggest gift ideas for residents who are more isolated than others. The seniors' names and gift suggestions were written on paper ornaments which decorated a number of trees in businesses around the city. The seniors weren't aware the hand-picked gifts would be delivered to them.

Diane Martin, director of care at Circle Drive Special Care Home, suggests things like socks, blankets, slippers, lotion and jewelry. She says no matter what age all of the ladies at the home love receiving new jewelry.

"When the residents get these gifts, they say, 'Aww! How did they know I like that? It's so nice,'" she says.

After only four days, all 800 paper ornaments were picked up by seven seniors around the city, so there is



Right: Shoppers at all service-style grocery stores in the community for the Be a Santa to a Senior program at Circle Drive Special Care Home. (PHOTO BY MICHELLE STIBBARD)

head created another 200, which were also gone within a few days.

Next, 20 people get the gifts and cards ready and drive to 100 volunteers delivered at all 11 facilities to no pay part residents like Daylene Chase, 71, who's been living at Circle Drive Special Care Home for 18 years.

It's the true meaning of Christmas," Chase says, whose closest relatives live in Toronto. "It's nice to

know that people in the community think about us. They remember that we are here and people who used to be walking around in the mall, and now they cease to us."

This was the third year gifts have been delivered in the Circle Drive Special Care Home and Martin says there each year to witness the excitement and appreciation — she continues, "It's a nice thing for your family to give you a gift, but when strangers give you gifts —

tears in her eyes.

"A lot of these people come from the community — these residents have given a lot to the community in the past — when the community recognizes them, I think it makes them feel they are not forgotten and that their investment have come up," she says. "It's a nice thing for your family to give you a gift, but when strangers give you gifts —

that's really rewarding."

Chayayn adds that seniors appreciate the time volunteers spend to not only deliver the gifts, but to visit with them as well. The three volunteers Bridges talked to declined to be interviewed for the story — they wanted to spread their Christmas cheer anonymously.

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IN THE CITY

DECEMBER 19, 2013 - 9:26 A.M.

Secret Santa has arrived



Elaine Miller holds Payton Ballantyne, 3, after her gift package at the Secret Santa headquarters during its 30th anniversary in Saskatoon. The CWW Denny Gair Secret Santa Foundation is an organization that provides food hampers and toys to less fortunate families every year during the Christmas season. (MATT DIXON/THE STAR PHOENIX)

YOUR FAVOURITE PLACE

Bridges wants to hear about your favourite place in Saskatoon. Email bridges@thestarphoenix.com

MY FAVOURITE PLACE

Brunch brings family together for seventh year



Russ Wilson and his family at the Sausation Inn, where they've celebrated Christmas with brunch for the last seven years. BRIDGES PHOTO BY MICHELLE BANG

By Angelina Ilinaci

Russ Wilson and his family have a special Christmas tradition. Each year, just over 10 family members get together for a special brunch at Sausation Inn, 1020 10th Street, Guelph City at the Sausation Inn. This year was the family's seventh gathering together for the brunch. Two of his grand kids have grown up with the tradition and he hopes to continue it on the years to come.

Q. How old is the brunch tradition now at the Sausation Inn?

A. (Russ) We've been doing it for 10 years and the past we have all

been here. We tried another place when we first moved to Saskatoon and the family wasn't happy with that. So that's why we're at Sausation Inn and stayed at the Sausation Inn one more year and we decided to come back here and everybody has been happy ever since. They love it.

Q. What's the best part of the breakfast?

A. (Russ) I think just the family being together. It's like the kick start for the next couple days for Christmas time and Christmas Day. Christmas Eve we end up at the end of the day heading out to church together and stuff. So it's a good

start to the whole day.

Q. If last year's made lots of special memories here, Any favourites?

A. (Russ) Three years ago, Telli surprised her mom and dad and me, so her mom and I had made a deal that she was going to be coming home but we didn't tell her mom that she was coming home, so that morning she had flown in the night before and stayed overnight at her brother's place — she came walking into the restaurant and her mom didn't know she was coming. She planned to say Merry Christmas, good morning and stuff, but instead from in

side of the restaurant then walked up and said "Hi!"

Q. What happened, Star?

A. (Russ) I heard from her mom I cried the whole time and I was talking to her mom and said, "Telli, I'm so glad you can be here." All of a sudden I look over and she's walking right up to me. It made me cry.

Q. Does your family have any other Christmas traditions?

A. (Russ) Christmas Eve has always been a special time for us because we as a family, end up in church. Then we head back to our place, have some cookies and stuff. It's the

precursor to actual Christmas morning. But we make the 30th into a very special family day.

Q. What do you hope the family remembers from during that?

A. It's funny because there's been several times when I say, "We might not do this again" and the children have sort of rebuked about that and say, "No, no this is one of our traditions. We always do this." So for us it's someone's nice legacy. It's a great time and it brings us together the day before Christmas when there's no stress and no mess and we can spend that time together as a family.

SPACES

Spaces celebrates beauty both indoors and out. If you have a living space we should highlight email bridges@thestarphoenix.com

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS DISPLAY

Display includes 50,000 lights, 400 extension cords

By Angelina Ernstad

WHO? John and Diane Reddelopp

WHERE? In Saskatoon's Knob Creek area, at 830 Wileton Ave.

WHAT? Their outdoor Christmas lights display synchronized to music. With around 50,000 lights included, it's impossible to miss the corner house while driving in the neighbourhood. Add to that ordinary Christmas gifts, they have decorations like angels, snowmen, reindeer, Santa, trees, a reindeer, a reindeer with a bell, a reindeer with lights and a reindeer star, which sits atop the roof. The roof is also part of the display. This year's newest addition are four houses lit up with lights that jump to the music. If you turn to the radio in your car to 106.9 FM, you can listen to the full 20-minute show and watch the lights. You're welcome to know the code: the music can be heard from outside of the home as well.

WHEN? The couple has always been big fans of Christmas lights and has been putting up a light display timed to music since 2006. Every summer they brainstorm what new addition they'll add, then get to work at the end of September. They worked on it every weekend until the end of November. "We take our time doing it because it's time consuming and we want to make sure it looks good and that it's not stressed out," says Diane, adding they try to act it all down before it gets really cold out. They turn the lights on from 6 to 10:00 p.m. every night. The display will be up until Christmas — Jan. 7. (continued on Page 10)



SPACES

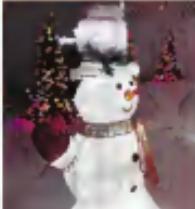
WHY? "We love Christmas so much and we just wanted to share it with everybody," Giese says. "It's great for getting people into the spirit. The neighbours look forward to the lights; the kids look forward to the lights," John adds.

HOW? When it comes to the light show, John hooks up an FM transmitter and programs the light controls so if is turned to the music. There are at least 400 extension cords to help power all the lights. The couple tries to buy lights and other decorations on sale after the season for the following year. This year there are 10,000 more lights than last year and the couple expects there to be even more next season. Giese estimates they've spent \$10,000 on the display over the years.

The two build most of the display themselves, including the star (last year's addition) and the leaping reindeer. The arches are made out of two three-metre poles anchored to a base which is pounded into the ground. Those decked out the drums by wrapping gift bags from the dollar store around cardboard drums sets.

They've enlisted much needed help from their son and daughter-in-law for some assistance. The couple spent about 60 hours putting everything together—the two light trees and taking a full day to set up. But, it's all worth it.

"It's rewarding for us because we too have much pleasure giving other people," Giese says.



ON THE COVER

I felt like I had failed as a parent.

— Thomasina Ross

CHRISTMAS 2013

Three unique reasons for the season

By Andrew Matte

With or without an appreciation of the religious component of Christmas, most agree that this season is a time to celebrate love, life and family.

So whether we're going to worship, with children open gifts or reach out to a neighbour in need, Christmas also serves as a benchmark. The Yuletide season can be a yardstick for life. We sometimes count the number of Christmases shared with someone we love, or take time to remember those we've lost.

This week, we share the stories of three Regi- nians whose Christmases are unique this year for reasons that have little to do with tradition, but everything to do with family, love and care, earnestly.

Thomasina Ross is grateful she's able to enjoy the holidays at home with her three children. And she's even more pleased about what she learned this Christmas.

"I didn't even want to think about me and my kids being homeless at Christmas," says Ross, as her 18-month-old son pulls himself up to her lap. "This is a good place."

Tragedy for this single mother of three began last year when she struggled to pay her bills and the physio she received from her job as a janitor for Bierss Place. In stress with her landlord and landlord she was evicted without a place to go or money to rent elsewhere.

"I was trying my best. I wanted to do it on my own. I didn't want to go on social assistance," says Thomasina, who is eight months pregnant with her fourth child.

"I woke up one morning and the power was off. I had to make a decision whether to pay what rent I could and try to stay in the house or just move and stay with friends," she says.

She took her children, and left most of her belongings behind, and headed to a shelter to stay with a friend in her two-bedroom apartment. Since then her two daughters, Dawson, 4 and Sienna, 3 and son Lyric, 1 — sleep in the living room.

"I felt like I had failed as a parent," says Ross.

She began looking for apartments right away but soon realized she couldn't afford the typical \$1,200 (or more) rent for a place to accommodate her growing family.

"Most of the apartments out there are so expensive. And they all want last month's rent and a damage deposit."

Continued on Page 32



Sienna, Dawson, Thomasina and Lyric Ross in their new home in Peterborough. MELISSA PHILLIPS/PHOTO BY TROY PELLETIER

I was trying my best. I wanted to do it on my own. I didn't want to go on social assistance.

— Ross



Theresa Ross and her children celebrate their new home in Dec. 2013. Ross is supported by Canadian Ombudsman and other community agencies in Regina. (Inset photo by Tracy Glavin)

But with the help of officials at Regina's Canadian Ombudsman and money she has saved using social assistance and other government subsidies, she found a small three-bedroom house in Regina's North Central area for to take over.

It was relatively cheap and simple, and also down the street from her kids' grandmother.

"I picked this one because it's pretty handy. Their dad's a man who just down the street," says Ross, adding the father of her kids is living in Alberta but is hoping to return in the new year.

Ross and her children moved in on Dec. 1 and officials at Canadian

and other agencies helped arrange for donations of clothing, a Christmas tree and other items. Among the items left on her back are a kitchen table, chairs and a toddler's bed for her son.

"For the past couple of weeks,

she's been working on this," says Lloyd.

But you won't hear Ross complain. She acknowledges the help she received from the community.

"I couldn't believe that this could happen just before Christmas," she says.

"I've just glad we got here when we did."

Dorothy Lloyd, a counsellor and housing support worker at Canadian Ombudsman, says Ross's story

isn't unique. A large number of people have trouble finding affordable accommodations in Regina.

"We accept people (as) who they are. Once we get them housed, we try to get them supported and hope that we can build a rapport so that if they need help in the future, they feel comfortable coming to us," says Lloyd.

Tom Thornton is as a good mom as doing the right things."

For Wanda Campbell, the best way to support the Christmas of 2013 is to avoid it.



The emotional wounds suffered when her 17-year-old son was killed in August are still raw, she says. Being present or choosing a tree at a difficult knowing her son isn't part of it.

"I can't celebrate Christmas. It's too hard," says Campbell, while bare-bones return to her work at the Alice Blair Cancer Centre.

"Christmas this year happened outside my house. It can't happen inside my house."

Local activist was on his way to the Dairy Queen on White City from Pilot Butte when he was killed on the Trans-Canada Highway. Attempting to turn left at the notorious Pilot Butte turnoff, he was broadsided by a vehicle headed west. Lane was crossing the highway but stopped to avoid hitting a vehicle preparing to make a left turn from Pilot Butte from the southbound lane.

Lane was a new driver but an RCMP officer told Campbell results had happened the same way at the same spot involving drivers of all ages, including a local crash several years ago.

In the weeks that followed, friends and family paid tribute to the Gerald High School student by placing crosses at the crash site.

While people are out buying Christmas presents and putting up their Christmas trees, we were out buying wreaths to put on the crosses that are out on the highway — Wanda Campbell

Campbell is appreciative of the gestures which she hopes reward her moment of the long-standing request from the community to build an interim and an off-ramp.

"Parents don't want their child to be forgotten. But we also hope that people will just slow down... they need an alternative there terribly. There is no much traffic in that intersection. And it's getting busier."

As the Christmas season approaches, Campbell didn't hesitate when she opted to do anything to do with the family celebration she typically looks forward to. "To think of Christmas is to be reminded of [Erica's] death," she says, which she admits she is still struggling with.

"While people are out buying Christmas presents and putting up their Christmas trees, we were out buying wreaths to put on the crosses that are out on the highway," she says.

Continued on Page 14



A remembrance cross is placed for 17-year-old Lorne Anstee (deceased 4/1) at the site where he died. (Submitted on the "Peace-Cards" campaign) MELISSA TAIT/STAR

Mandy Campbell (left) & Aly Anstee are remembering their son at a roadside cross this Christmas. (Submitted photo by Mandy Campbell)



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I just can't celebrate Christmas. It's too hard. Christmas this year happens outside my house. It can't happen inside my house. — Campbell

The only sign of the season is Campbell's home in in her sun room where a small tree belonging to Lance was set up and decorated with ornaments given to her by her grandmother.

Unable to bear the notion of waking up Christmas morning at home, she will be at her sister's house with her daughter Lindsay, and preparing for a family get-together.

"That's the first time we've done that. But in the afternoon, we're flying to Las Vegas."

"We thought it was a good idea to just get away," says Campbell.

Campbell is also comforted by her daughter's company. Lindsay interrupted her studies in Bechtel soon after her brother's death to be at home with her mother. "I am so grateful to her, like you wouldn't believe."

Campbell has also reached out to a local support group and attended a candlelight vigil attended by families celebrating the lives of lost loved ones. She hopes to continue her involvement with Compassionate Friends, which hosts meetings for grieving families.

"I am looking for other parents so I can perhaps see how they have been able to survive, because sometimes I don't think I am going to be able to," says Campbell.

Steve's first gift this year came about three weeks ago.

That's when government officials removed the ignition interlock device from his vehicle, which had been installed some months earlier to prevent guilty to impaired driving.

"To me, that was my Christmas present. It gave me my freedom back."

The story of Steve's break with the law and personal recovery began in the summer of 2011 when police removed cells about a vehicle crashing from lane-to-lane as it sped down the highway. He was Steve. He was charged, spent a few hours behind bars in his brother's former suspended.

At the time, the circumstances of that July 5 were horrifying. Today Steve has positive thoughts about the incident. It was an opportunity to



An ignition interlock device for converted impaired drivers. "You're maybe I'm saving my own life here. And maybe I'm saving someone else's," says Steve. (AP Photo)

turn his life around without causing more trouble than he already had.

That is exactly what I needed to get my life back on track. And I am grateful that I didn't kill or hurt anybody," says Steve, 51, who added me to get back his rights as a citizen to drive again. "I wanted to share my story to encourage others."

Steve is 6'5" with dark hair he goes years ago when he discovered that bone was the perfect substrate to the dismantling of his own feelings, he says angry sad or even happy.

He acknowledged his shoulders pain again, sought treatment and lived several years as a sober person. However, he grew overconfident and figured an occasional drink wouldn't do any harm until he found himself

driving alcohol as a crutch just as he'd done prior to crashing.

Coming out of treatment I had fear at the pains of great suddenly but you lose sight of it. And you think, 'maybe I'm OK,'" Steve says. "That is a tricky disease." He got a job as a truck driver. He got a part-time job as a bartender. He got a part-time job as a security guard and decided that a future without alcohol will help him protect his life family and career.

Having a great job is great, wife great kids and wonderful family — now that is the most important part of my life. If I don't have that, then I don't have anything."

He's also learned how to cope with his emotions. He discovered that emotions can be worked through without using alcohol to wash under-

lying alcohol as a crutch just as he'd done prior to crashing.

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lying alcohol as a crutch just as he'd done prior to crashing.

"If I felt happy or sad, it would be a trigger. Alcohol let me out of that. I learned that it's OK to cry it's OK to laugh. These are all things that I lost years ago. And it's OK to let all that happen."

And while that is a lesson where alcohol is absent at many Christmas celebrations, Steve prefers to think of his impaired driving arrest as a gift that keeps on giving.

The last two and a half years have been the best of my life. Amazing things have happened in my life that never would have happened if I hadn't been sober," he says.

"I guess maybe I'm saving my own life here. And maybe I'm saving someone else's."

NEXT WEEK: Do you make New Year's Eve a family activity? Email bridges@thestarphoenix.com

PARENT TO PARENT

Each week Bridges, in connection with SaskatoonMoms.com, gathers advice from parents to share with other moms and dads. This week we asked:

How does your Christmas Day usually play out? What's the best part?



"We usually get up whenever the kids do, the kids open their Santa gifts and then we have breakfast. And while we wait for the rest of our family to arrive. Once everyone is there, we open presents out way, breakfast and lounge around for the day. The best part of the day is being with family" — Michelle Gaudet

"When the kids were little, my parents and one other couple over for dinner. Then my son and another went to the outdoors to play hockey. Parker the kids go to bed for their naps. That's when we all celebrate our big family Christmas on Boxing Day" — Judy S.

"After the kids would wake us up around 5 a.m., my husband and I let them knock any time or until 6 a.m. because he had made his coffee and we sat down together. The anticipation and their nervous eyes looking at the gifts was precious. Daddy then handed out the stockings, and after they were emptied, he then handed out the gifts one by one. We always process allowed us to fully appreciate each other's happiness. Then there was an evening in the room (full of wrapping paper). Followed by a day of playing and an evening supper with extended family" — Debbie Pernatt

"Christmas day is always a hectic young family day. grandparents come to another. We would always sit there, possibly church out, eat out at a local eat of choice" — Alysha Connealy

"Trying to keep the presents from being over-engaged by our year-old (about) where they could be. I told her the Elf on the Shelf is always watching and reports back to Santa" — Lisa Trotter (@ChezPleyn) 48K

"WBKA for present opening and festive cheer for Christmas Day! #MerryChristmas" — Lisa Trotter (@ChezPleyn) 48K

"Dinner! I bet now there is a new appliance for this called Heels Up. We placed this past week and it's an only family gathering and it was so much fun!" — Joanna Wysot

"Lived away all the Christmas boats with the decorations and read them as I slowly cook each. Each of the kids has a favorite, and they treat these books very carefully and safely" — Lisa Trotter (@ChezPleyn) 48K

Authentic Amish Cooking



Courtesy photo of Amish Prairie

Chicken Breast Supreme

1 chicken breast
1/2 onion
1/2 pear
1/2 t. salt

1/2 t. butter
1/2 t. garlic powder
1/2 t. lemon pepper

1/2 t. paprika
1/2 t. onion powder

1/2 t. pepper
1/2 t. salt

1/2 t. basil
1/2 t. oregano
1/2 t. thyme

1/2 t. rosemary
1/2 t. sage

1/2 t. nutmeg
1/2 t. allspice

1/2 t. cloves
1/2 t. cinnamon

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FASHION YXE

HOLIDAY FASHION

Lisa Blehm: Two holiday looks

By Ashley Martin

Lisa Blehm doesn't have to go far to dress up her casual party looks for the holidays.

She's manager of Cedo Style Lounge and has a hand in layout stock for the new Ritz-Carlton store.

"It's like shopping for a living and it's like fun," says Blehm.

Needless to say, the fashion lover has a few style items on her Christmas wish list.

CHRISTMAS CASUAL

For Christmas Day, comfort is key because we're going from house to house and visiting family. She'll use accessories to dress up a casual base.

1. **EARRINGS:** Hiltz & Berk

2. **NECKLACE:** Cade

3. **VEST:** Cade. "I'm loving the vests right now and we have a lot of them."

4. **TOP:** Joe Fresh

5. **WATCH:** Michael Kors

6. **LEGGINGS:** American Apparel

7. **SHOES:** Cade. "I'll always be in heels because I'm kind of small."

NEW YEAR'S EVENING WEAR

For a night out, Blehm gets a little fancy, opting for simple black dresses, maybe just a little bit of sparkle.

1. **DRESS:** Winners

2. **BRACELETS:** Aldo

3. **CLUTCH:** Cade

4. **SHOES:** Cade. "Not a lot of girls don't like wearing those foot heels in the winter time, but I think it's OK to do that. You have to make a sacrifice sometimes to look good."



For Christmas, Lisa Blehm goes casual (left) while New Year's Eve means a dressier look. PHOTOS BY BRYAN SCHLOSSER



READ MY BOOK

LOCAL AUTHORS: Writers tell us what makes their book worth reading

ERNEST BOERNERT

The Magic Christmas Train

Today my nephew Len is an athlete. He's now in college and is in great shape.

When Len was still very young and using a high chair he came to stay at our house because his father was hospitalized. Len stayed with us for some time and our family more or less adopted him. It was always a point of interest to know what Len was doing as he grew up and entered elementary school.

I decided to write "The Magic Christmas Train" so that it could be

about Len in a story.

Christmas, which len loves best, gift decorations, family gatherings and special foods. However in The Magic Christmas Train at first Len comes out on some of the things associated with Christmas.

It's winter time and the weather is cold. His parents are away from home and he didn't even get a chance to tell Santa what he wanted for Christmas. That makes him very unhappy because Christmas has never been

before going to bed, Len looked out his window and saw the train steam up from that was at the railway station. Len knew the train didn't work anymore but before he fell asleep Len wished it could take him to see Santa

Len suddenly found himself at the old railway station where the Grand Master Toy Maker invited him to climb aboard the train. Len is only wearing his pyjamas and slippers but there must be magic around because he's not even cold. Even though there are no railway tracks, the old steam engine begins to move away from the station and travel into the countryside. The train cars are full of elves and they are putting toys together. The train stopped occasionally and the completed toys were taken outside by the elves. Many unassembled toy parts were loaded on the train.

The Grand Master Toy Maker told Len that he had him sick and that was why was all of the toys were

ready for Christmas. When the train stopped again, Len went outside and he was very surprised to see Santa. Santa was taking the finished toys to deliver to boys and girls.

After the toys had all been put together Len was even lucky enough to get a ride home in Santa's sleigh. On Christmas Day his parents were home and he was very surprised to see that Santa has brought him the special toy he wanted.

The Magic Christmas Train is printed by Trafford Publishing. The book is available in Region 1 Books and Chapters. It's available by special order through east Saskatoon bookstores and online at www.trafford.com. Also available is Boernert's previous book "The



Great Alphabet Book and Christmas Donner To Go
Ernest Boernert is a retired teacher who lives in Region 1.

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ON THE SCENE

#SYPE 2013 BOARD ELECTION NIGHT AND CHRISTMAS MIXER

A well-dressed crowd of about 45 young professionals convened in a hip downtown space — the Rouge Gallery — on Dec. 19 for the SYPE (Saskatchewan Young Professionals) and Extravaganous Christmas mixer. Candidates for SYPE's 2014 board made their election speeches while members engaged in business and drinks.

SYPE Saskatoon works closely with other organizations to promote business growth for its members by providing networking events and regular luncheon seminars. Members also take on corporate challenges to support worthy causes in the community.

1. Stephanie Yorstad and Nefeli Rhodes
2. Kaitley Kindachuk, Danielle Wiltong and Isabella Keatham
3. Kasey Semple (left) and Kelly Bode
4. Joe and Caitlin Gill
5. Jen Pevel (left) and Ian Bremner
6. Beccie Kuzmenuk

**BRIDES PHOTOS
BY RICHARD MARJAN**



EVENTS

MUSIC

Thursday, Dec. 26

Brewster and the Busters
Buds on Broadway,
877 Broadway Ave.

Mohawk
Anjous Centre,
832 10th St. E.

RedBlue
Stair's Place,
106-10 Ruth St. E.

Friday, Dec. 27

BBF BFF
Buds on Broadway,
877 Broadway Ave.

Plane Friday w/ Paul Sechen
Jazz Transfer Series: The Collective Prints

Deflowers
Amy & Avery Veterans Club,
339 1st Ave. N.

The Nobles
McNelly Robinson,
3130 Eighth St. E.

The Rebellion w/ Anspen and Ethan w/ Guests (Jeans and Jorts)
Anjous Centre,
832 10th St. E.

RedBlue
Stair's Place,
106-10 Ruth St. E.

Saturday, Dec. 28

BBF BFF
Buds on Broadway,
877 Broadway Ave.

Cheer Piano Mania
Duds
Buds/Cheer The Barbershop

The Basement,
332 Fourth Ave. N

Lady Henrie
Nurture Legion,
3321 Luster St.

Deflowers
Amy & Avery Veterans Club,
339 1st Ave. N.

Phoenix
Downtown Legion,
856 Speedline Cres. W

The Lost Keys
McNelly Robinson,
3130 Eighth St. E.

RedBlue
Stair's Place,
106-10 Ruth St. E.

Sunday, Dec. 29

Lady Henrie
Nurture Legion,
3321 Luster St.

Tuesday, Dec. 31

Seven at the
Buds on Broadway,
877 Broadway Ave.

Henry Starpon (Lounge)
Lady Henrie (Nurture Legion),
3321 Luster St.

The Manpas
Downtown Legion,
856 Speedline Cres. W

New Year's Dance w/ The Da McConville Band
Town Team Tavern,
1230 Fairlight Dr.

New Year's Eve Bash: Hartman Blaive w/ McNight
O'Brien Event Centre,
2401 10th Street S.

Saskatoons' New Year's Eve House Party: McNight w/ McNight & DJ Asador
Prairie Land Park,
503 Ruth St. W

New Year's Eve: The Bell-Jerry Brothers w/ McNight
Buds/Bones Casino,
204 Buds/Bones Way,
Whitewood

New Year's Eve w/ Young Squares, Meeta Prabhakar and Marie Lessard
Anjous Centre,
832 10th St. E.

Tropic New Year's Eve:
Perry w/ DJ Mikey Gobzat and Chant

Tropic New Year's Eve:
Perry w/ DJ Mikey Gobzat and Chant

Tropic New Year's Eve:
Perry w/ DJ Mikey Gobzat and Chant

1201 Alberta Ave.

New Year's Eve Bash w/ McNight & McNight
Town Team Tavern,
105-10 Ruth St. E.

ART

Urban Art Gallery
Unit 3 3rd fl 950 Speedline

Class 8. 9 am-9:30 pm. Works include Revolving Modularity and They Made a Day be a Day Home Gothic, the Artists by the People exhibition and a solo show by Guy Ethier. His mentor Bruce Macdonald leaves. The gallery shop has a Boxing Day Sale Dec. 26. Tickets for the Jan. 11 LUGO art party and fundraiser are on sale Jan. 2. Visit www.ugallery.ca.

The Gallery of Prairies-McNelly
Library

Unit 100 27th St. The gallery features the work of local artists, including Leah MacLean, Judith Gifford, Kathryn Davies and Mary-Jane Penick.

Centres East Galleries

Unit 200 30th St. The centre displays art by Leslie Starckchuk & Erin McNiel Whalen, Scott Prakash, Spell It Photo Art, Rosemary Perry, the Prairies Sprint School, Dakotah and the Saskatchewan Public School Board.

Station Arts Centre, Rotunda

Unit Dec. 30 7-10 PM. Performances by the Rotunda Singers and Donnas Egg. Artist: Tooling Cards - No Story That Smells to Tools, Jan. 3-31.

The Gallery Art Placement
Unit Dec. 31 2013-2014

Art: 5-7 pm. The Season, small world holiday show.

Ukrainian Museum of Canada

Open through the winter at

Northgate

Black Spruce Gallery
Through December at Northgate. As topics an Highway 2 Works by four new artists

Judy Bruce, Sandra Chermak, John Ellsworth and Jennifer Sapekko

Performing Arts

Through December at 100 Grainger Centre, beauty in the Details, paintings and photography by Shawnae Werner.

DeFestivals Canada Centre
Through December at 1001 de la Mailleraye St. The Story of Ave. Centrale.

Affinity Gallery
Unit 3 3rd fl 950 Speedline Ave. 30th Dimensions, juried by award winning artists. Michael Hoskin, Hoskin and Bassin and a colour reception with live band. Jan. 3-9 p.m.

Calories Restaurant

Unit 100 3 3rd fl 731 Broadway Ave. Seeking Kanterine, new works by Kathy Bradshaw.

SL Theatres More Gallery

Unit 6 6th Fl 33 1st 1437 College St. Art by Michaela Merz and Mark Merz. An opening reception will be held Jan. 10 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Malin Coffee Bar

Unit 100 3 3rd fl 1101 Hospital St. Photography by David DeWitt, on sale and display.

Wheatris Library

Through January at Wheatris. Watercolours, art for the season and the Holidays.

Heimdale House Showcase

Unit 100 3 3rd fl Broadway Ave. Contemporary, Urban, Traditional, Scarves and Shawls for the Textile Art Group.

Black Spruce Gallery

Open through the winter at Northgate. Focus on Highway 2. After Dec. 1, group show.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Baking Matza
Dec. 26 3-6 p.m. at the Mitzvah Centre, 10th and 10th Street. A winter-themed matza. Pop-

corn and juice are available and you can bake your own matza. Call 306-666-8888.

Kaehde's Winter Music Festival
Dec. 28 at Mitzvah Centre. A Western Canadian winter music festival, featuring electronic artist deadbeats and rapper 2 Chainz. Visit www.kaehde.com/musicfest.html.

The Best Mr. Gay Comedy
Tuesday, Dec. 24 7-10 p.m. at TCU. Plans former schoolteacher turned comedian Gerry Desper performs.

New Year's Eve Gala
Dec. 31 7-11 p.m. cocktails, 8 p.m. dinner, 11 p.m. dancing.

Summer Summer
Presents 20th years of musical theatre in 2014. A reunion for alumnus, patrons and the cast. Displays a look back on the 2013-14 season from the last 10 years, and a dance with DJ Robert Reynolds, all leading to the midnight curtain. Visit www.summersummerplayers.ca.

Latitude New Year's Eve Plastic
Dec. 31 9 p.m. at Albert Community Centre, 610 Clarence Ave. E. Presented by Latitude dance academy. Dance with DJ, a DJ booth, a dance room, a Latin dance room and a kids entertainment room. A fundraiser for the previous International Saskatchewan dance academy. Call 306-411-1886 or email info@latitudedance.com.

New Year's Eve and Labrador
Dec. 31 9 p.m. at The Galleria, 10th and 10th Street. A 1950s and 1960s music band. Call 306-234-8888.

BBF's Enchanted Forest Holiday Light Show
Dec. 27 7-9 p.m. at The Saskatoon Fairground Park & Zoo. The drive-through Christmas display features its 10th anniversary. Funds raised will benefit the Saskatoon Zoo Foundation and the Saskatoon City Hospital Foundation.



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MUSIC

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HOLIDAY MUSIC

The best festive songs are originals

By Ashley Martin

Every year, I look forward to putting up my tree and finally — finally — turning on the tunes I've reserved for the season. And while I love tuning into "SaskTel's Official Christmas Station" My 98.1 I like exclusively play holiday songs through out December, there's no way to match Céline Dion and Michael Bublé this girl can take.

Over the past few years, I've created a pretty expansive Christmas music catalog. My current Christmas library is up to 720 songs ... like diversity ... but there are a few traditional true artists I play more than most. And they generally seem to favor original songs that haven't been covered to death.

Here are six great holiday albums

Enya the Great and The Wistful — *This is Christmas* (2011)

This collaboration is pretty sageable, and the only song I recognized was Marshmallow World, which is a really different cover choice. Sleep Me in is a real standout last song. Zounds! Christmas deserves a festive acoustic apologetic. But my favorite has got to be (Duet) Call Me. Miss Christmas is a upbeat song from the perspective of Mrs. Claus. "Give my what life is to you and what did I get?" I've just as easily."

Loretta Lynn — *A Country Christmas* (1966)

The queen of country music (at least, my queen ... I love Loretta) covered a set of holiday favorites here, but the best songs on the album are two original and hilarious looks in the teeth, the first to Santa Claus and the second to the jaded "I Want" (With the Santa Claus) of children. "When he goes running through the snow, I hope he falls." I Wish I Decoy rate Your Christmas Tree. This song tells that goofball the world may be one step out with his friends, because "poor holes are burnt out and your tree don't shine, I mean the hem's a-winkin that time."

Jeffery Straker — *Country House for Christmas* (2013)

This is a new favorite in my rotation,

and part a single. Just Begna singer-songwriter Jeffery Straker hit the nail on the head. It's super catchy and happy-go-lucky — just the ticket for a Christmas single. The title says it all. I am a sucker for romances. "You're running home for Christmas. You help to make it a lovely little time of year." This song reminds me of the airport scenes in *Love Actually*, or the *The Thin Man* commercial where the dad carries his son's holiday photo around 'til those years later. It's just full of your heartstrings good.

Holiday Workkase — *Pull Moon Eleven* (2011)

Two years ago I discovered two of my favorite Christmas recordings. The first was Robert McLean's *Very Merry Christmas*. Then, *Workkase* was the indie rock alias of his second guest. In my mind! Oh, the years I wasted! *Workkase* Workkase released *Almost a Pull Moon*, an EP of original Christmas songs. Two years later we're re-reviewed the songs and re-titled *Pull Moon Eleven*. This album is pure genius. It's hard to choose just one favorite song, but *Three Generations* always makes me tear up — it's about three generations in the kitchen all at once. Then there's *Almost a Pull Moon* (Gef's Make Some Soup), which is adorable — a love song that hunger on making us sing.

Patty Loveless — *Bluegrass, White Snow* (2002)

It's chock full of covers, but with a bluegrass bent, those 10 standards feel new. Then there are three originals, the title track to my favorite, a fitting, more debt-heavy tune about joyful Christians in Kentucky where Loveless grew up. "All the hard times melted out as the season died off." The harmonies by Dolly Parton just add to the appeal.

Ska and Hymn — *A Very Ska and Hymn Christmas* (2013)

Though it's one too original, this compilation by Ben Roney-Destouches and M. Ward has been one of my go-to sources. I bought it. It's fun. Roney-Destouches' voice is soft, as it doesn't overtake a room, and, because they're all cover songs, you don't feel the need to pay too much attention



Jeffery Straker performs during the *Very Merry Christmas* Tour in 2013. (Photo by David Tait/Redferns)

GARDENING

* LEGENDS AND MEANINGS

The story behind seasonal plants

By Erl Svendsen

There are many plants associated with the season that is upon us, many of them rooted (pun) in the past. But they have become mere decorations so much so that their original meanings have become forgotten or pushed aside.

Here in an evergreen bought at this time of year has been planted since at least the Roman times. They were used to decorate homes during Solstalium in celebration of Solstal, the god of agriculture. Because they were plants that did not die, evergreens represented good health and fortune. As far as using the white evergreens were lead of Juniperus Communis are a symbol of a learned person, especially a woman, lived, dressed back then on the fourth century BC. It is more likely that the first Christmas tree was created in 1600 in Alsace, France (then part of Germany). Martin Luther is credited with introducing lights to replicate his experience of seeing stars shining through the trees in the forest. He used wax candles, not a recommended practice today. Luckily, in 1880 electric Christmas lights were invented and today we have energy efficient strings of LEDs.

Evergreen wreaths have also been around for centuries. The wreath itself symbolizes eternity and the evergreen branches signify immortality. Decorated with dried fruits, flowers and seeds, the wreath then represents the annual cycle of the season.

Rosemary at Christmas is now mostly used as a seasoning in turkey stuffing, at least in my house. But it used to feature more prominently during the season. Aside from a couple of legends involving the Mother Mary, it was somebody's stress on church floors and in the home. When walked on, it released a pungent smell that was associated with friendship, fidelity and remembrance.

The poinsettia is a relatively recent import to the Christmas season. Discovered by Joel Poinsett during his time as US ambassador to Mexico in the 1800s, poinsettias are now the second most popular plant associated with Christmas. The legend is how it came to be so beautiful: helped a poor, young Mexican girl who had nothing to give the baby Jesus. Her cousin told her that it didn't matter what the gift was, as long as it was given with love. So the little girl picked a bouquet of weeds by the roadside to offer to the baby Jesus at the



Nothing says Christmas quite like a basket of poinsettias. PHOTO COURTESY LIE WEST

nativity scene on Christmas Eve. The older children taunted her but then the weeds suddenly transformed into the bright red flowers we know today. From that night forward, they were known as Flores de Noche Buena or Flowers of the Holy Night.

One myth to dispel: poinsettias are not actually toxic. According to POISINDEX, a 55-pound child would have to consume at least 500 poinsettia leaves before beginning to approach a toxic dose. In a review of nearly 35,000 cases of poinsettia exposure, 98 per cent did not require

treatment as a health facility. And not a single death has ever been documented. Some people may experience skin irritation from the sap and if consumed, leaves may cause stomach upset, vomiting or diarrhea.

Kwanzaa, while celebrated during the week between Christmas and New Years (Dec. 26–Jan. 1), is not a religious observance. Instead it is a celebration of African American culture and values, first celebrated in 1966. Two of the Kwanzaa symbols are plants: Maua (fruits, roots and vegetables) symbolise historical harvest

festivals or gatherings where joy, sharing, unity and thanksgiving were the true fruits of labor. Vilozhni (plant, incense) is a single ear of corn, one ear for each child in the family. But it goes beyond a simply numbering of children – it is a recognition that it takes a village to raise a child, involving the whole community as each one contributes their patience, love and understanding.

This column is provided courtesy of the Sunbeamers Personal Injury (www.sunbeamers.com) and Erl Svendsen (erlsvensend@gmail.com).

OUTSIDE THE LINES



Merry
Christmas
 FROM
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 &
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Last week's contest winner is Dorian Johnson. Thanks to everyone who submitted entries!



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WINE WORLD

OSBORNE ORO DARK AND SWEET SHERRY

Turn Christmas cake into extra-special treat

By James Romanow

Christmas cake is one of the older cultural customs during this season. Essentially this is a bread cooked to the density of a patio paving brick. A good cake will be loaded with dried fruits and nuts. A bad one is like eating pre-molded constipation.

I have had my number of excellent Christmas cakes over the years. It took me a while but I worked out what the difference is between the good, the bad and the ugly. Christmas cake is meant to be sweetened in liquor. Some have stopped this step. The result is about as tasty as a dead rat's ass.

So then, there you are, poor mother-in-law's place, attempting to convince her that you are the perfect person to eat your brother's You know she will feed you her version of wheat keli, and you will need to pretend you like it. Here's how. (What's more if you're smooth enough you can induce the whole family down the path of wickedness.) Christmas cake will never be the same.

First, buy a 500 ml bottle of Oxo Sherry for every three people attending. This will not bankrupt you, as it only costs \$13. At that price you can afford to feed a Christmas cake gathering. Second, pour everyone a very stiff shot in a coffee mug (No coffee!) You need a mug be-



cause they are all about to be taught the joys of darkness. With luck they have already mastered this with a much less pleasant coffee and doughnut.

This stuff is an astounding dessert wine. It smells and tastes of maple syrup, walnuts and dried fruit. There are few desserts that match it.

Osborne Oxo Dark and Sweet Sherry \$13
www.osborne.com

More great drinks in the Monday paper and on Twitter @drjameso

Crossword/Sudoku answers

CHAT	SPF	PAZES
HOBOD	FLUE	EXALTY
OSBON	FOURS	REPLY
MULTI	TOSSES	SAY
PSI	SCORCHPAP	
	NEHI	ORIGEN
MAGS	GRANDOPERA	
ALOT	COI	PTAS
SALI	STEVENS	ETNA
TIBIA	ABLY	
	ME	BEAMER
JAI	LEARN	REBES
ALAMO	AGONIZING	FULS
CAGE	YEW	FREE
KNOTS	OLE	AGES

6	5	4	7	1	9	8	3	2
9	1	8	4	2	3	6	5	7
2	3	7	8	5	6	9	1	4
1	7	6	9	3	5	4	2	8
5	4	2	6	7	8	3	9	1
3	8	9	1	4	2	5	7	6
4	6	3	2	9	1	7	8	5
7	2	5	3	8	4	1	6	9
8	9	1	5	6	7	2	4	3



Next week in BRIDGES

Francis and Mary Kargbo's shipment of hope to family in Sierra Leone is just in time for Christmas

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SHARP EATS

SHARP EATS

How to make your own gingerbread house

By Michelle Berg
and Jenn Sharp

We've all been there — the pre-made gingerbread house kit at the grocery store is calling out to you with promises of easy fun for the little ones. You pick one up, take it home and let the kids loose. The only problem with these kits? Your gingerbread house will look the same as everyone else who bought the kit. If you could save a bit more originally, then it's all the power to you. If not, we've got a recipe for homemade gingerbread and the steps to make your own house (or other creation).

Bridges photographer Michelle Berg went off on her own making a Noah's Ark for the annual competition held during the Festival of Trees at the Western Development Museum in Saskatoon. Bands raised \$4,000 towards the Beukelicious 45th Classical Research Chair Competition.

Making your own gingerbread house could be a great way to spend time with the kids on cold days indoors during the school break, too. Follow on for Michelle's instructions and send us your pictures of your final product!

sharp@thestarphoenix.com
facebook.com/SharpDishes



Photo by Michelle Berg. To see more photos from the Festival of Trees, visit www.thestarphoenix.com.



The ingredients you'll need to make homemade gingerbread



Mix in the eggs

I've been going to the Festival of Trees since I was a girl. I always look forward to the creations displayed at Gingerbread Lane. Each year I add myself. I would make one to enter. This year I finally did.

I didn't feel like making a typical house so I put a little creativity and went with a Noah's Ark, mainly because I thought that making a house out of fondant would be fun.

Gingerbread

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup molasses
- 1 cup butter
- 2 large eggs
- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1/2 cup ginger
- 1/2 cup cinnamon
- 1/2 cup cloves
- 2 1/2 cups baking powder
- 1 1/2 cups baking soda
- 2 1/2 cups raisins
- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 2 1/2 cups sugar

See a food trend you think deserves a highlight in Bridges? Email bridges@thestarphoenix.com or visit Bridges on Facebook



Cream the butter and brown sugar



Mix in the rest of the ingredients

METHOD

1. First start with the dry ingredients. Measure out the cups of your house, and roll on paper or clothed, then cut them out. With the ark I made the sides of the base, supporting beams, the top house and the roof (with holes for the gingersnap beams).

2. In an electric mixer, cream butter and brown sugar until fluffy. Mix in eggs and salt. Beat in eggs, molasses, baking soda, baking powder and vinegar.

3. Add flour. Mix on low speed until thoroughly combined. Divide dough into thirds and wrap in plastic. Chill for at least 1 hour.

4. Heat oven to 375F. On a well-floured surface, roll out dough to 1/8 inch thick. Cut out desired shapes on parchment-lined baking sheets. You can make as prints on the dough before baking to look like a log house or brick-like blocks to simulate, or round gingerbread shapes in the center but not deck around the edges.

5. Bake gingerbread in until golden brown, roll out dough to 1/8 inch thick

SHARP EATS



Place in a ball and refrigerate for two hours.



Roll gingerbread shapes on parchment paper.



Ingredients for the icing: the "glue" for your treats.



Michelle Drapic's decorated Noah's Ark.



Fondant giraffes and elephants.

ROYAL ICING

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 large egg whites
- 1 cup confectioner's sugar
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar

METHOD:

1. Beat egg whites, lemon juice and powdered sugar until stiff. If necessary, beat with electric mixer on low speed. Use immediately, or transfer to an airtight container (preferably using hardened quality when exposed to air) and refrigerate up to one week. Stir well with a flexible spatula before using.

CONSTRUCTION PROCESS:

2. Pour a strong glaze of confectioner's sugar on the base. I have used a cutting board for the base. I have used a cutting board for the base.
3. The unfrosted portion may have rounded off during the baking process. You can shave them down with a knife to ensure all pieces fit together.
4. Use each gingerbread piece separately and hold them in place. Once secure, finish with the roof pieces. The royal icing acts as glue — once dry, it won't be going anywhere.

TIME FOR FUN — DECORATING!

I chose to make animals out of fondant but you can also buy fondant and cover your house with many motifs.

FONDANT ANIMALS

This is when you can be creative and feel like you're back in kindergarten playing with Play-Doh.

5. I bought white fondant from Michael's and made different colors using food coloring gels.
6. Roll fondant out flat so you have to be quick. Be sure to keep the pieces you're not using on a sealed container.
7. Shape your fondant into whatever you like — you like and part them however.

I flattened my fondant with a little bit of shredded wheat to look like hay.

Now you can put your completed creation on display, or eat it!

Caution: This gingerbread recipe is meant to be sturdy — you may break a tooth.



Fondant animals



Fondant monkeys



Fondant birds

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